



# The Town of Westfield Master Plan Reexamination Report

## Community & Public Participation Summary for the April 29<sup>th</sup> Westfield Community Workshop



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## Public Participation Summary for the April 29<sup>th</sup> Community Workshop

Prepared By:



architects + engineers  
practical approach. creative results.

Workshop Date:  
April 29, 2019

Prepared Date:  
May 8, 2019



# Community & Public Participation

## Purpose

This Master Plan Reexamination Report cannot be written, nor recommendations made without input from the people who live, work, and visit Westfield. Without valuable public input, this document will not accurately represent the wants and needs of Westfield residents. The Master Plan Reexam Team (H2M *(lead)* and TimHaahs) is working hard to obtain ideas, opinions, feedback, and concerns from the public throughout the year long Master Plan Reexamination process using “high touch” to “high tech” approaches, ranging from traditional workshops to online engagement. This collaborative approach provides community insight on the future of Westfield.

## Community Workshops

A Master Plan Reexamination Steering Committee comprised of Westfield community leaders is helping to guide the Master Plan Reexam process. The Steering Committee, upon their first meeting in December 2018, believed input from several active Town organizations separate from public workshops would benefit the Master Plan Reexamination process. The Town of Westfield and the Master Plan Reexam Team planned six community workshops, four to occur in the beginning of the process to gather information and two additional meetings at the end to provide a “feedback loop” for residents.

The first public Community Workshop was held on March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Edison School Cafeteria, where approximately 70 people attended and the second workshop was held on Wednesday April 3<sup>rd</sup> at Town Hall in the Community Room, where approximately 90 people attended. The April 24<sup>th</sup> Community Workshop was held at the Edison School Cafeteria where 96+ people attended. The fourth and final community workshop during this first phase of community outreach was held at Town Hall in the Community Room where approximately 20 attended. All workshops ran from 7pm to 9pm in the evening.

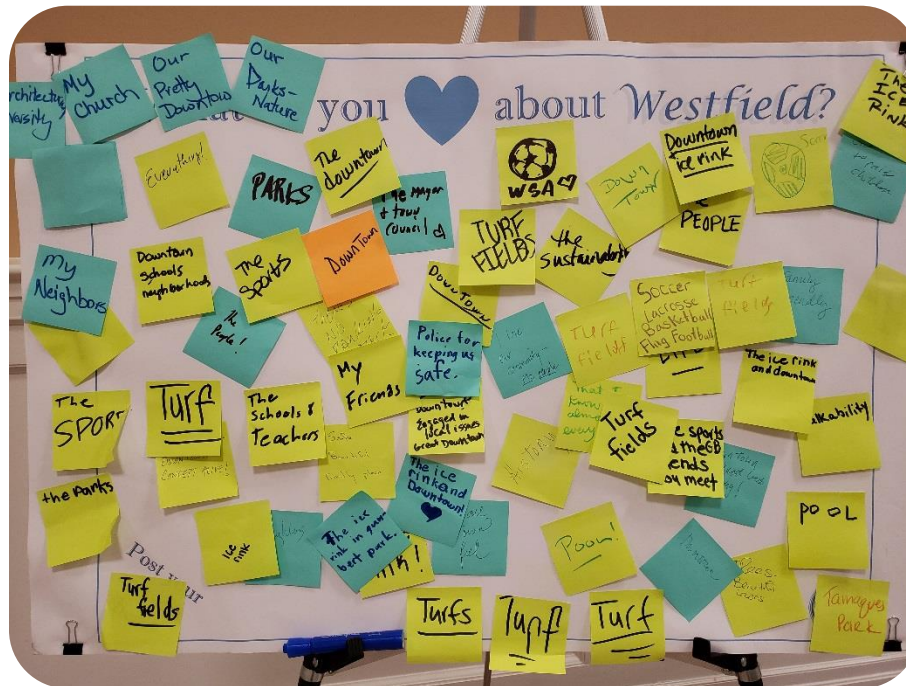
The Master Plan Team and Town of Westfield will be attending the Spring Fling on Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup> to continue outreach efforts.

In the fall, the Master Plan Team will hold two Town-wide public meetings to discuss the draft of the plan and gain feedback on the Master Plan Reexamination Report’s draft goals, objectives and recommendations.



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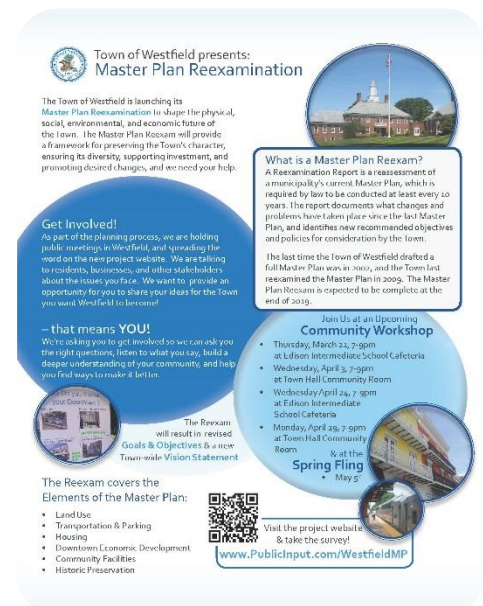


The workshop began with an introduction from Jeff Janota of H2M Associates, the consultant preparing the Master Plan Reexamination Report and head organizer of the event. Erik DeLine, Nicole Venezia and TJ Ricci, planners from H2M, were also in attendance. Also, in attendance were Nan Chen and Emily Maciejak of TimHaahs, the parking consultant.

Upon sign-in, participants were given a Master Plan Reexamination Report flyer and an orientation/room layout handout for the night's activities. While waiting to sign-in participants were asked to indicate where they lived in Westfield. Participants were then directed by team members to gather near the projector for a short introductory presentation.



*Above: orientation/room layout handout;  
Right: Master Plan Reexam Flyer*







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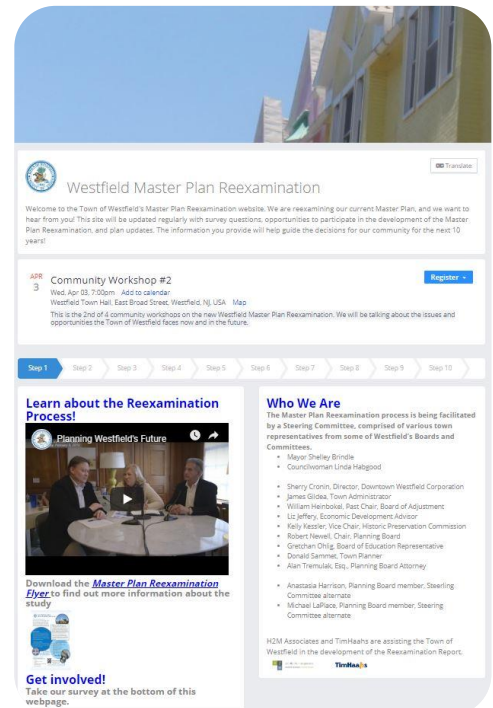
During the introduction, Jeff Janota (H2M) explained the Master Plan Reexamination Report and the purposes of the night's workshop:

1. To gain an understanding of Westfield community issues through the eyes of residents.
2. To promote the Master Plan Reexamination Report public participation process by encouraging participants to be ambassadors to the Plan.

Erik DeLine (H2M) then explained the project's website, <http://www.PublicInput.com/WestfieldMP> and encouraged participants to take the online survey in their free time. Erik also pointed out that the workshop included a survey table with laptops for online survey taking. Since the beginning of the survey process there have been 683 surveys submitted.

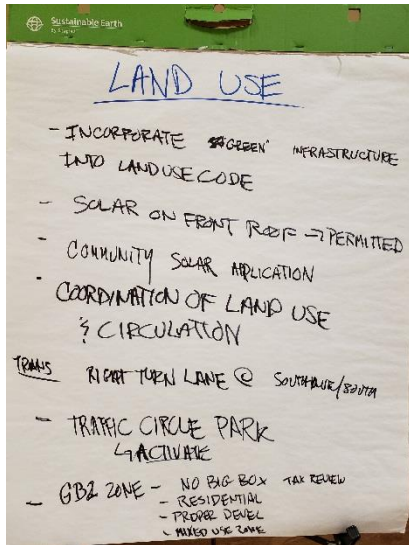
### Interactive Portion

This interactive part of the workshop required workshop participants to join in conversation with the "topic table" facilitators broken out into (1) **Land Use and Economic Development**, (2) **Transportation & Parking** (3) **Community Facilities**, and (4) **Historic Preservation** to express their opinions, ideas, ask questions, and state their concerns. Each Topic Table was equipped with a handout for participants containing a 3-4 bulleted list of topics that could be discussed and a handful of guidance questions to help kickstart the brainstorming/interactive participation process. Each "topic table" was facilitated by a Master Plan Reexam Team member. A summary of issues resulting from the April 29<sup>th</sup> workshop is listed on the following pages. **Bolded** items indicate popular or repeated sentiments.





## 1. Land Use & Economic Development



**Land Use & Economic Development** concerns include:

- Incorporate "green" infrastructure into land use code
- Solar on front roof – should be permitted
- Community solar application
- Coordination of land use and circulation a priority because of traffic
- GB Zone District:
  - No big box as permitted use
  - How will tax appeals affect is L&T closes?
  - Allow residential
  - Proper density of development
  - Mixed use zone



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## 2. Transportation

TRANSPORTATION

Promote TOD around train station  
↳ Lord + Taylor rezone from GB-2a

↳ one-seat ride to NYC

↳ Better use of surface parking lots  
↳ turn into retail to increase revenue + property values

↳ Better bike facilities  
↳ connect to schools, DT, train station

↳ Bike parking at transit bus stops  
↳ more at station

↳ more parking around station

↳ more service for B3 route

TRANSPORTATION

Need EV charging stations  
↳ incorporate w/ retail

↳ ridesharing partnership w/ Uber/Lyft

↳ Make Westfield more friendly to bicyclists + pedestrians

↳ Encourage more walking by students  
↳ Safe Routes to School Program

↳ Look at modifying Westfield Circle

↳ expand underpasses into Central

↳ new underpasses

↳ offsite improvements from new developments

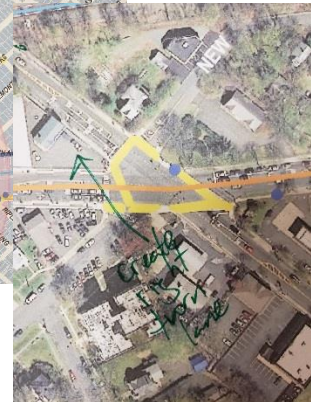
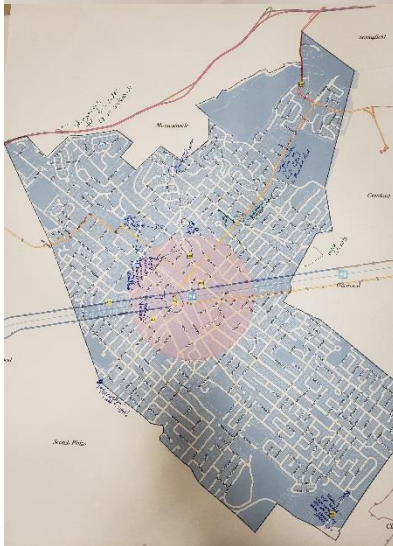
TRANSPORTATION

Specific waiting areas/lots for Lyft/Uber  
↳ entrance to train station?

Create standard for sidewalks based on roadway hierarchy  
↳ fill in gaps  
↳ Central Ave

↳ Poor ped access into DT for Senior Complex

↳ Use chipseal to improve roadway life



### Transportation concerns include:

#### Transit

- Designate specific waiting areas/lots for Lyft/Uber pickups/dropoffs rather than permitting it all over the downtown— possibly at the entrance to train station
- Explore ridesharing partnership with Uber/Lyft for connection to train station/downtown
- Promote TOD around train station
- One-seat ride to NYC

- More service for Bus Route 113 needed
- More parking around station
- Bike parking at bus stops, more at station

#### Bike & Pedestrian

- Create standard for sidewalks based on roadway hierarchy: fill in gaps; Central Ave.
- Poor pedestrian access into Downtown for Senior Complex





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- No. Chestnut between Maye & Plaza, no sidewalks
- Where entrance to YMCA is located- Mid-block crossing; better lighting; unsafe to cross; better signalization
- Make Westfield more friendly to bicyclists and pedestrians
- Encourage more walking by students – Safe Routes to School Program
- Better bike facilities: connect to schools, downtown, train station
- Westfield Circle/ E. Broad Street - problematic intersection
- E. Dudley/Lawrence and E. Dudley/Prospect – need to be 4-way stops
- N. Euclid/Kimball – People don't stop
- US-22 bus stop – dangerous for bus riders, no sidewalk (in Mountainside)
- Priscilla/Birch/W. Chestnut – dangerous intersection
- Need traffic calming on E. Broad and on Mountain Ave.

### **Vehicles & Roadways**

- Use chipseal to improve roadway life
- Need electric vehicle charging stations – incorporate with retail
- Look at modifying Westfield Circle
- Expand underpass into Central
- New underpasses under rail line
- Rahway and Lamberts Mill – traffic light needed, can't make left onto Rahway after church, soccer, etc.
- W. Broad St/Lamberts Mill Rd (at border with Scotch Plains – Bad intersection – needs a light!
- Plaza/N. Chestnut/Benson – Bad intersection, no pedestrian marking
- Mountain/Orchard/Park intersection – confusing, hierarchy of movement needs to be established

- S. Chestnut and Benson are wide streets
- Create dedicated right turn lane from Central onto North Avenue
- Create dedicated right turn lane from Central onto South Avenue

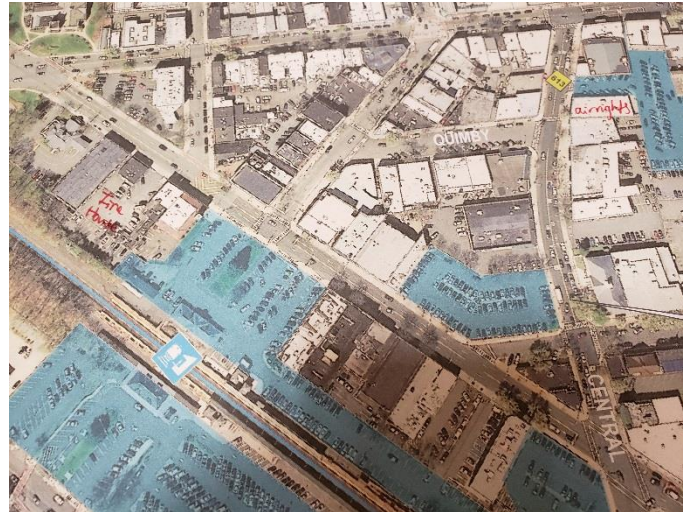
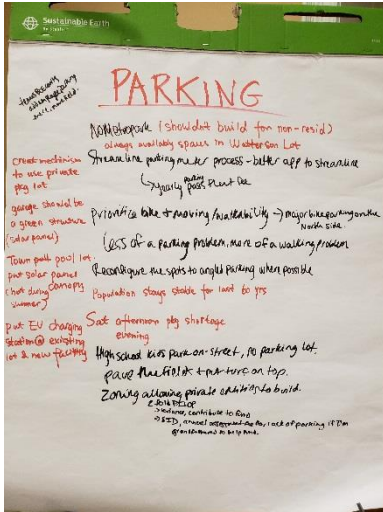
### **Miscellaneous**

- Town should insist on offsite traffic/transportation improvements from new developments
- Lord & Taylor area should be rezoned from BG to promote TOD
- Better use of surface parking lots – turn into ratables to increase revenue and property values



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## 3. Parking



### Parking concerns include:

#### Downtown Parking

- Use the BOE tennis courts and field for employee parking, move field
- Watterson lot always has parking, especially in the PM
- Extend Lot #5 (behind Rialto)
- Put electric vehicle charging station at existing lot and new facility
- Only real parking shortage is on Saturday afternoons/evening, never trouble finding a spot at other times
- Reconfigure the spots to angled parking where possible to maximize number of spaces
- Less of a parking problem, more of a walking problem
- Westfield does not need to be like Metropark (shouldn't build parking structure for non-residents)
- Garage should be a green structure (solar panel)

#### Parking Technologies & Training

- Allow private entities to build via a PILOP program: allocation fee to off-set user-paid fees in the downtown
- Streamline parking meter process – better app to streamline

- Yearly parking pass - flat fee at all lots
- Lot #4 used to be gated, would be ideal location for “pay on exit” using centralized kiosks or digital reader
- Create mechanism to use private parking lot

#### Community Facilities & Parking

- High school kids park on-street (they have no dedicated parking lot) so commuters and high schoolers compete for on-street parking
- Pave the fields at High School and put structured turf fields on top
- Put solar panel canopy (hot during summer) at Town Pool parking lot

#### Miscellaneous

- Population stays stable for last 60 years
- Prioritize bike and moving (walkability): put major bike parking on the North Side of train station (currently most is on the South side)
- Lord & Taylor has too many parking lots

#### Residential Parking

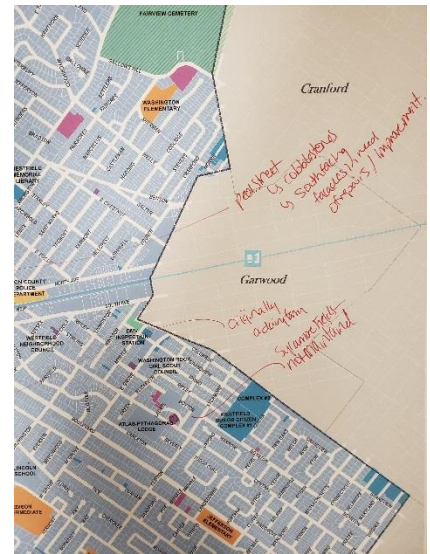
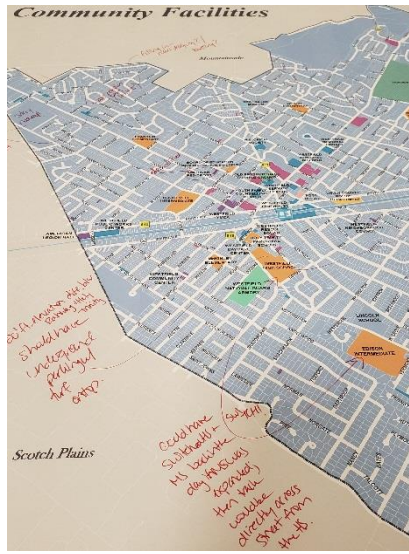
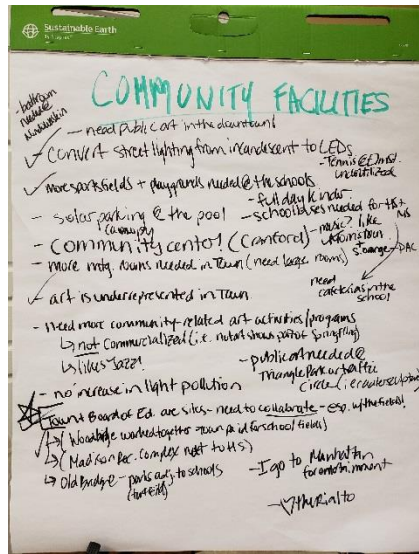
- New/S. Elmer/South Ave - Apartment





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## 4. Community Facilities



**Community Facilities** concerns include:

### Schools

- Westfield High School: 20' ft elevation difference between Rahway & Holy Trinity; should have grade-level parking with turf on top
- Westfield High School & Edison Intermediate – could have switched these facilities back in the day – could have expanded Edison building to accommodate a high school, then track would be directly across street from the HS
- More sports fields and playgrounds needed at the schools
- Full day kindergarten
- Need cafeterias in the school
- School busses needed for High School and Middle Schools
- Westfield High School - originally a dairy farm
- Town and Board of Ed. are silos – need to collaborate – especially with the fields! Examples include: Woodbridge worked together – town paid for school fields ; Madison Rec.

Complex next to HS ; Old Bridge – parks adjacent to schools (turf field)

### Community

- Need a community center! (like Cranford's)
- Existing Westfield Community Center is very underutilized
- More meeting rooms needed in Town (need large rooms)

### Arts & Culture & Entertainment

- Need public art in the downtown!
- Music? Like Morristown and S. Orange PAC
- Art is underrepresented in Town
- Need more community-related art activities/programs but not commercialized (i.e. not art shows part of Spring Fling); public art needed at Triangle Park or traffic circle (i.e. calder sculpture across from library); likes Jazz!
- I go to Manhattan for entertainment
- Love the Rialto
- Quimby – could be a Pedestrian Street – cobblestones; south facing



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facades in need of  
repairs/improvement

### **Community Facilities**

- American Red Cross – demolished
- Lawrence area - Water retention basin (built 95) Filling in – needs dredging/lowering?
- Brightwood Park and area should stay natural; mulberry bushes were removed – should be replaced! - area between Madison/ Oaktree / Prospect

### **Sustainability**

- Convert street lighting from incandescent to LEDS
- Solar parking canopy at the pool

- No increase in light pollution
- Westfield Conservation Center – Love battery recycling and 2<sup>nd</sup> chance toys

### **Safety**

- More street lighting – Edgewood, Embre Crescent, W. Dudley area

### **Miscellaneous**

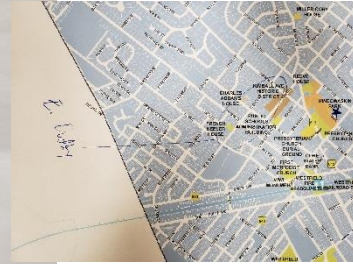
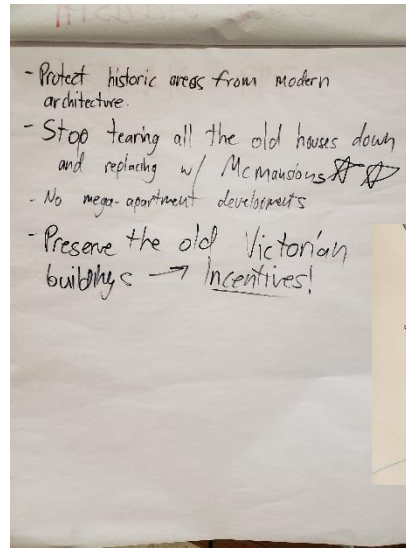
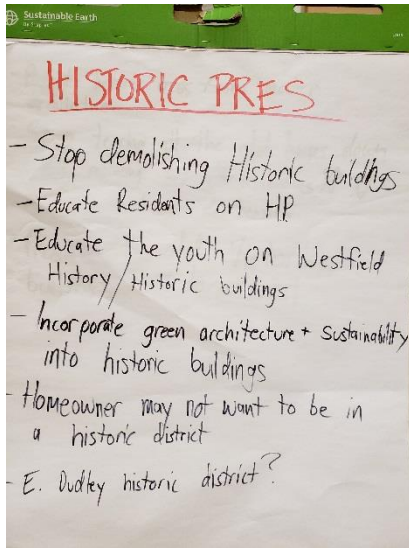
- Westfield Public Works Center – want to know about events! Town should promote; community playhouse
- Bathroom needed at Mindowaskin
- Tennis at Elm St. underutilized
- Sycamore Fields – not maintained



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### 5. Historic Preservation



**Historic Preservation** concerns include:

#### Demolitions

- Stop demolishing historic buildings
- Stop tearing all the old houses down and replacing with McMansions

#### Historic Preservation Education

- Educate residents on historic preservation
- Educate the youth on Westfield history/historic buildings

#### Preservation

- E. Dudley historic district?
- Protect historic areas from modern architecture

- Preserve the old Victorian buildings – Incentives!
- E. Dudley area – Charles Addams House, Kimball Ave. historic district, Frenchy Keeler House

#### Miscellaneous

- Incorporate green architecture and sustainability into historic buildings
- Homeowner may not want to be in a historic district
- No mega-apartment developments